
Annual Report of PROFS, Inc.
July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021

I CHARGE

PROFS, the Public Representation Organization of the Faculty Senate, is a non-profit organization established by the Faculty Senate in 1976. The function of PROFS is to represent the UW-Madison faculty's interests – with particular emphasis on compensation and benefits, the university budget, legislation affecting the university and important regulatory issues – before the state legislature, the governor, Regents, other state and federal governmental agencies, the U.S. Congress, and the public.

II PARTICIPATION

PROFS is a voluntary dues-supported organization, funded through payroll deductions by faculty. Contributions are one-tenth of one percent of one's salary deducted once each month in which salary is earned.

III ORGANIZATION

Leadership

The elected members of the University Committee serve as the board of directors of PROFS. For the 2020-21 academic year, the following individuals served on the Board of Directors:

- Kirsten Wolf*, chair (German, Nordic & Slavic)
- Bill Tracy (Agronomy)
- Erica Halverson (Curriculum & Instruction)
- Eric Sandgren* (Pathobiological Sciences)
- Kristyn Masters* (Biomedical Engineering)
- Lauren Papp (School of Human Ecology)

Much of the day-to-day work of PROFS occurs under the supervision of the president and steering committee. Michael Bernard-Donals was named president in June 2020. Steering Committee:

- Michael Bernard-Donals, President (English and Jewish Studies), former University Committee member
- Barbara Bowers (Nursing), former University Committee member
- Barry Burden (Political Science)
- Judith Burstyn (Chemistry), former president, former University Committee member
- Bradley Christian (Medical Physics)
- Julie Dawson (Horticulture)
- Dorothy Farrar Edwards (Kinesiology), former University Committee member
- Nicholas Hillman (Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis)
- Ruth Litovsky (Communications Sciences & Disorders), Budget Committee member
- Eric Raimy (English)
- Steph Tai (Law), Faculty Senator
- Anja Wanner (English), former University Committee member
- Terry Warfield (Accounting), former University Committee member
- Timothy Yu (English and Asian American Studies)
- University Committee members noted with an asterisk (*) above

PROFS Bylaws

The bylaws of PROFS (last updated in June 2021 and on file in the PROFS office) specify the University Committee serves as the PROFS board of directors. The steering committee consists of at least three current members of the University Committee; at least three members with prior experience on the University Committee; one or more at-large members selected from the UW-Madison faculty; at least one member from the Faculty Senate; and one member of the

Budget Committee. Members who do not serve on the University Committee serve three-year renewable terms. Current University Committee members may serve renewable one-year terms.

Legislative Representative

Jack O'Meara continues to serve as PROFS Legislative Representative. Mr. O'Meara meets regularly with the board of directors and the steering committee to update them on legislative proposals affecting the faculty, establish PROFS' positions on legislation, and determine action. Mr. O'Meara meets with individual legislators and other officials at appropriate times to discuss PROFS issues and urge support of the faculty's position. PROFS arranges for members of the steering committee and other faculty members to meet with legislators, state officials, Regents, the media, and the general public, and to testify for or against key legislation.

Administration

Michelle Felber is the half-time administrator and website/social media editor. She communicates regularly with faculty with email and through posts to the PROFS website, Facebook page, and Twitter feed and manages the banking and accounts payable. SVA Certified Public Accountants prepare annual taxes and the PROFS president or secretary/treasurer signs checks. The by-laws were amended in 2011 to require a financial review at least every three years. A financial review was completed by SVA in January 2021 and is available in the PROFS office for review.

Lobbying

As an organization engaged in lobbying, PROFS is required to register with and report to the State of Wisconsin Ethics Commission, filing a lobbying report twice each year. PROFS also reports its interest in any legislative bill, proposal, or budget item, and if it is taking a position, its positions. All reporting is available on the Wisconsin Ethics Commission website, ethics.wi.gov.

IV COMMUNICATION

PROFS communicates regularly with all faculty through e-mail updates and posts to the PROFS website (profs.wisc.edu), Facebook page (facebook.com/PROFSUWMadison) and Twitter feed ([@PROFSUWMadison](https://twitter.com/PROFSUWMadison)). Communication through social media continues to grow. PROFS has more than 700 Twitter followers and Facebook posts were regularly read by hundreds of Facebook users.

V MEMBERSHIP

PROFS reaches out to new faculty every fall and continues outreach efforts to veteran faculty members. Revenue from membership held steady. In cultivating membership, PROFS emphasizes its past achievements, including:

- Helping to secure \$86 million in state-supported bonding for UW-Madison Chemistry Building project
- Leading the campaign for pre-tax retirement contributions, saving faculty about \$1,800 per year
- Securing the implementation of first-day health insurance coverage

PROFS also emphasizes its platform for the future:

- Improving state funding for the UW budget, including competitive compensation for all faculty
- Acquiring greater management flexibility for UW-Madison, including for tuition setting and managing building projects
- Increasing funding for graduate education and research

For more than 40 years, PROFS has played a key role in advocating for UW-Madison and its faculty. PROFS' sole charge is to advocate on behalf of faculty and needs continued support of the faculty to maintain its efforts. Faculty are always welcome to support PROFS by completing the form in the PROFS brochure or on the PROFS web site, profs.wisc.edu.

VI 2020-21 LOBBYING & LEGISLATION: PROFS' ACTIONS AND POSITIONS

PROFS was active during the 2020-21 legislative session, meeting with key legislative and university leaders. PROFS participates in more informal discussions, sending emails, making telephone calls, stopping in offices, and talking with people at meetings and in the halls of the Capitol. Over the course of the academic year, PROFS met with UW System Interim President Tommy Thompson, Regent Tracey Klein, Governor Tony Evers, and legislators.

COVID-19 Pandemic

The pandemic continued to dominate university operations and, to a lesser degree, the work of the legislature. While most courses were taught online, students returned to campus housing in the fall. UW-Madison implemented regular testing in an effort to avert large COVID outbreaks. Unfortunately, infection rates among students surged shortly after the semester began, followed by increased rates in Dane County a few weeks later.

PROFS supported Governor Evers' statewide mask mandate and joined more than 50 other organizations encouraging Republican leaders to drop their proposal to repeal the mandate.

COVID-19 also affected the university's budget. In September, the governor's office announced \$300 million of additional budget cuts due to the pandemic. These cuts, to be taken in FY21, were \$50 million more than Governor Evers proposed in July, but UW System's share of the cut was reduced from \$69 million to \$45 million. PROFS worked hard to ensure the cuts to the university were reduced. PROFS put together a joint shared governance statement that was signed by PROFS; ASPRO, the academic lobbying group; and ASM, the student government association. Jack O'Meara also spoke with Wisconsin Department of Administration Secretary Joel Brennan to encourage the state to reduce the cuts.

2021-23 State Budget

The state budget process officially began in August when UW System Interim President Tommy Thompson announced detail about UW System's 2021-23 state budget request. The operating budget proposal — a 3.5 percent increase over the biennium — featured ten key initiatives, including 20 new UW-Madison Division of Extension county-based agriculture positions. The capital budget proposal included two projects important to UW-Madison: a new engineering building to support increased growth in the College of Engineering and a new Letters & Science academic building to replace the aging Mosse Humanities Building.

Governor Tony Evers introduced a favorable 2021-23 biennial budget in February, exceeding the UW System request by almost \$100 million. Evers' proposal included \$190 million in new funding for UW System, including more than \$50 million to fully fund a continued tuition freeze and \$40 million over the biennium in unrestricted funding to address student needs and budget losses due to COVID-19.

The Governor also introduced a \$2.4 billion capital budget, which included almost \$1 billion for UW System. UW-Madison had four major projects in the proposal: a new College of Letters and Science building, a new College of Engineering building, funding for the restoration of the Music Hall, and funding for utility work on the Engineering campus.

In April, Republican legislative leaders identified hundreds of items to remove from Evers' budget, including borrowing authority for operational expenses at UW System and a plan to expand Bucky's Tuition Promise to all UW System campuses. In June, the GOP majorities crafted a budget that dramatically slashed program funding for the UW. It provided less than 5% of what Governor Evers proposed and less than 10% of what President Thompson proposed. It did not include funding for the engineering building.

On the plus side, the legislative budget included funding for the new Letters and Science Building. It also ended the in-state tuition freeze, which PROFS lobbied for. And the budget included funding for 2% per-year pay increases. Pay plans need to be approved by the Joint Committee on Employment Relations (JCOER).

Legislation

PROFS followed and lobbied on many bills:

[Assembly Bill 177/Senate Bill 209](#) PROFS registered against these bills that limit the use of drop boxes for returning absentee ballots.

[Assembly Bill 192/Senate Bill 203](#) PROFS registered against these bills that place new restrictions on absentee ballots.

[Assembly Bill 201/Senate Bill 204](#) PROFS registered against these bills that make it harder to use absentee ballots and register to vote electronically.

[Assembly Bill 77/Senate Bill 80](#) PROFS registered in favor of these bills, which provide \$1 million for state specialists who provide certain UW-Extension services. Similar funding was added to the state budget by the Joint Finance Committee.

[Assembly Bill 195/Senate Bill 323](#) PROFS registered against and provided testimony opposing these bills that prohibit transgender women from participating in UW System and Wisconsin Technical College System intercollegiate, intramural, and club sports.

[Assembly Bill 347/Senate Bill 375](#) PROFS registered against these bills that prohibit UW System and the Wisconsin Technical College System from requiring testing for, or vaccination against, COVID-19.

[Assembly Bill 362/Senate Bill 359](#) PROFS registered in favor of these bills that restore previous shared governance language to state statutes.

[Assembly Bill 363/Senate Bill 360](#) PROFS registered in favor of these bills that restore previous tenure language to state statutes.

[Assembly Bill 370/Senate Bill 260](#) PROFS registered against these bills that prohibit UW System and UW Hospital and Clinics staff from, while in the scope of their employment, performing or assisting the performance of an abortion. This legislation could jeopardize the accreditation of the obstetrics and gynecology residency program.

UW System

PROFS continued to play an active role in advocating for strong shared governance in UW System search and screen committees. PROFS met with Regent Karen Walsh to discuss changes to regent policies, and PROFS President Michael Bernard-Donals drafted a concept paper with suggestions for specific changes to those policies.

VII FEDERAL RELATIONS PROGRAM

Even though Jack O'Meara and PROFS leaders did not make any trips to Washington, D.C., PROFS continued to monitor developments at the federal level. In addition, Jack worked with a group of faculty who are committed to promoting greater diversity, especially for Black faculty, in the awarding of NIH research contracts. Jack reached out to congressional offices, and in April, the group had a meeting with an aide to Senator Baldwin who serves on the Senate Appropriations Committee. Senator Baldwin has been working with other senators on language to be added to an appropriations bill.

VIII CAMPUS OUTREACH

PROFS co-hosted a virtual state budget forum with the La Follette School of Public Affairs and ASPRO on May 7. State Senators Jon Erpenbach (D-West Point) and Dale Kooyenga (R-Brookfield) and Jason Stein, research director at the Wisconsin Policy Forum were panelists. La Follette School of Public Affairs Director Susan Yackee moderated. About 100 people joined the live event and others watched it on YouTube later.